

Cognitive and language disturbances in behavioural variant of Fronto-Temporal Dementia: an update

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State of art

The diagnostic criteria for FTD highlight cognitive and behavioral executive disturbances, memory and other cognitive functions being relatively spared at first stage of the disease. However, recent work suggests that a disturbance in memory, social cognition and language are relevant elements to take into account, so much so that they could serve as an additional diagnostic marker. The objective of this work is to provide an update of currently available knowledge about the cognitive and language disturbances of the behavioral variant of FTD.

Methodology

Search was conducted using electronic online databases: PubMed, Google Scholar, using different combinations of the search terms included cognitive disturbances, linguistic level, tasks and other keywords. We included all papers according to actual criteria of possible and probable bvFTD. Systematic reviews and scoping reviews were preferred and other studies had to include a minimum of 4 patients and comprehensively assess the relevant area.

Results

The criteria retained 79 articles on language and 98 articles on cognition. Concerning language and communication, the data show that disturbances are frequently reported on the spontaneous speech, pragmatic, communicational, semantic, syntactic and orthographic levels. In the same way, memory and praxis disorders are finally frequently reported. Moreover, socio-cognitive disorders seem to be early and specific diagnostic markers.

Conclusion

It is now necessary to reconsider the cognitive and language disturbances of bvFTD patients in the light of the data currently available in research. These data also invite the inclusion of certain language and socio-cognitive criteria in future bvFTD criteria.

Conflicts of interest

none